

# **SOUTHWEST COORDINATING GROUP (SWCG)**

July 31 – August 1, 2003 Meeting Minutes

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kirk Rowdabaugh (Chair), Bill Waterbury, Bob Lee, Jeff Whitney (7/31 & 8/01 morning), Bob Lineback (for Bryan Swift), Nancy Neskaukas, Pam McAlpin (8/01 only), Lorene Guffey (8/01 for Jeff Whitney), Dugger Hughes

**NOT PRESENT:** Willie Begay

**GUESTS:** Ron Matt (7/31), Rich Naden (7/31)

The meeting began at 1000, July 31, 2003.

No minutes from the 6/24-6/25 meeting in Tucson were available for SWCG approval.

## **PREVENTION**

Bob Lee will write a draft letter on behalf of the SWCG showing support and assistance in the development of prevention positions. FS approved position descriptions will be given to Jay for posting on the Prevention Committee website.

## **ARIZONA WILDFIRE ACADEMY**

A request has been made to the SWCG for sanctioning and support. After a general discussion, the SWCG decided funding should go to the group from the Rural Fire Assistance Program, with verification for teaching NWCG approved courses conducted by Arizona State Fire Management Division.

## **FIRE USE TRAINING ACADEMY (FUTA)**

FUTA continues to grow and produce courses outside of the FUTA curriculum. As a result of the grow and a recent high level interagency review, the SWCG will become more involved in overseeing management of the Academy. Due to these future changes, a new charter is being developed by the FUTA staff, a name change may occur (i.e, SW Fire Training Center or Academy, etc), Steering Committee, and a 5-year business plan to be developed. Discussions are on-going and will continue at the next SWCG meeting.

## **FIRE WEATHER PROGRAM**

Rich Naden (for Chuck Maxwell) provided the group with a document detailing concerns related to the products being disseminated by the NWS within the Southwest Area. SWCG encourages Chuck (through Rich) to continue follow-up with the NWS on the issues raised in the document.

## **S-520/620 NOMINATION**

A discussion was held on the S-520/620 nomination process. Discussion revolved around finding solid candidates, 2-year mentoring program, systematic process for nominations, use of Type 2 teams as a step in the process, and the relationship between Type 1 and Type 2 teams. The SWCG felt a meeting should be arranged with all current Type 1 and Type 2 Incident Commanders and their deputies to discuss this and other Southwest Incident Management Team business. Thus, a tentative date of September 9<sup>th</sup> in Flagstaff was agreed upon. Dugger will contact the IC's.

The SWCG agreed that the S-520/620 nomination process should change and follow the current established training guidelines. Thus, starting with the next nomination period for S-520/620, the nomination form will go direct to the Zone Training Coordinator, then to the Agency Representative on SWCG. The Agency Representative will bring the nomination before the SWCG for selection.

### **TYPE 1 INCIDENT COMMANDER SELECTION**

The Southwest Strategy Regional Executive Committee would like to be informed of the Type 1 IC's selections before they are announced. The SWCG agreed to this and will provide the REC with the names of the individuals selected for REC ratification.

### **TYPE 1 TEAM SUPPORT**

A discussion was held on how best to provide support funds for Type 1 teams. Discussion revolved around a fair and equitable dollar figure, whether to provide funds to SWCC Center Director for management, and development of a Geographic Area Operating Plan. The SWCG decided it was best to continue funding when requested and not to establish a single account in SWCC.

### **TYPE 2 INCIDENT COMPLEXITY**

A discussion revolved around the overextension of Type 2 teams on potentially complex incidents. The question at hand is 'should the SWCG step in and switch out a Type 2 team with a Type 1 team when it appears as though complexity is above minimum trigger points for a Type 2 team to manage.' After a lengthy discussion, the SWCG decided it did not have authority to pull one team for another. However, the SWCG decided it does have a responsibility to step-in and review, recommend, and suggest a change to the Agency Administrator when an incident reaches a high complexity level.

### **SOUTHWEST COORDINATION CENTER**

Dugger discussed several issues related to SWCC.

Deputy Director: Dugger requested the SWCG consider creating a GS-12 Deputy Director position in SWCC. This person would have comparable duties of the SWCC Director. In order to create the position, the BLM-NM would remove its GS-11 position from SWCC and FWS, which has an open GS-12 position within its organization, would fund this new Deputy position. FWS has agreed to cover the new position. Since BLM-NM would no longer need to cover the costs of a GS-11, they have agreed to pay the entire salary of Center Director position instead of cost-sharing the position with the other agencies. The SWCG members agreed to the creation of the FWS Deputy position and the removal of the BLM-NM Coordinator position. The changes would take effect in FY-04.

Budget: Dugger provided the SWCG with a breakdown of costs associated with the SWCC and a summary agency workload analysis. He went on to request from the SWCG if a master agreement should be written to cover these costs and whether separate SWCC accounts should be established. After a short discussion, the SWCG agreed that an agreement was not necessary and separate accounts for SWCC should not be established. Each agency will continue to cover their own. Dugger will complete a Project Work Plan (PWP) over the next week or so and will send a copy to the SWCG for review.

Delegation of Authority: Dugger requested the SWCG provide him with a written Delegation of Authority. He will draft a letter for signature by all SWCG members, which will be valid for three-years and will include wording to cover a Deputy.

National Issues: Dugger held a general discussion with the SWCG on other issues related to national and area preparedness levels, EERA's, ROSS, Arizona/Phoenix Mobilization Center, and 14-Day Work/Rest Guidelines. No formal decisions were made by the SWCG.

### **S-520/620 AIR OPERATIONS**

Clay Templin has forwarded to the SWCG a draft letter requesting an Air Operations component be added to the S-520/620 curriculum for AOBD's. The SWCG agrees to the addition of Air Operations, but would like to revise the letter before forwarding. Thus, Pam will review then re-send to SWCG members for final approval. Upon signature the letter will be forwarded to the S-520/620 Committee.

### **3-TIER/4-TIER DISPATCH SYTEM**

In response to national direction and at the request of the SWCG, Dugger has been working on a draft preliminary study on moving from a 4-Tier Dispatch System to a 3-Tier Dispatch System in the Southwest Area. Dugger stated response from those he has contacted has been good, but a fair amount of work continues to be needed. Some of his preliminary alternatives discussed included pulling all IA locations within one Zone Office, possibly creating new zones, co-locating offices, keeping Federal units at 3-tier, Southwest Strategy involvement, and 3-tier where it can work, but may include a 4<sup>th</sup>-tier.

The SWCG agreed that this process will be long-range in nature and that several alternatives could result. Preliminary alternatives for SW REC to consider include (1) elimination of Zones Coordination Center, (2) removal of IA centers and develop Regional IA Centers, (3) creation of new boundaries for current Zones, and (4) elimination of SWCC and creation of East/West Zones.

Dugger will continue working to collect information, draft alternatives, and develop strategies, as necessary, for the SWCG. His final product will include a map and three or four alternatives for the September meeting. The SWCG will be the Interagency Team that will respond to the National Offices on behalf of the SWA.

### **SMOKE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Arizona DEQ is requesting through the SWCG to make several changes to the ICS-209 form. The changes are related to reporting type of vegetation burned on a daily basis. The SWCG did not support this change at this time.

### **SOUTHWEST REC TASK GROUPS**

The SW Regional Executive Committee has requested formation of some fire task groups to deal with priority issues from the 2002 Lessons Learned Report. The charter and some additional assignments were discussed by the SWCG.

The next meeting of the SWCG is planned for September 9-10 in Flagstaff, Arizona. One day will be dedicated to Type 1 and Type 2 team issues, and the other day to old/new business, including examining SWCG liaisons with committees and FUTA, sign delegation to Dugger, and examine/discuss FUTA charter.

The meeting adjourned at 1200, August 1, 2003.

/s/ Kirk Rodabaugh

Chair

Southwest Coordinating Group

\* Minutes for this meeting will be finalized at beginning of the next meeting.

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